

The Argumente of D. Erasmus of Roterdame vpon the firste Epistle of S. Peter.



Deter writeth to the Jewes that dwelt here and there in the
 coastes of the Gentiles (as James dyd in an Epistle, no doubt)
 worthy the chief of the Apostles, which is full of Apostolike
 authority and maiestie, and is composed in fewe wordes,
 but full of sentences. He exhorteeth meane patiently to beate
 the euils, that they suffred for malice of the gospell, in hope
 of reward. Moreover he admonisheth them, that accordyng
 to the Prophetes mencioned saynges, beyng freely called to so high digni-
 tie, they expresse a life worthy of their profession. For he sayth, christianitie
 consisteth not in title of baptisme onely, but in innocencie of maners: for in
 that they are otherwyle afflicted with sorowes, it maketh nothyng to the
 glory of Christ: if they appeare manifestly to suffre for naughtie dedes do-
 ing. Furthermoze he admonisheth such as come in to christianitie, that they
 refuse not to obey magistrates, though they bee heathens, lest beyng pro-
 uoked they can neyther be conuerted to Christ, but become more feare and
 cruell. Also that seruauntes denye not their duetie to their maisters, though
 they be heathens. For the office of christian goodnes is, to suffre al thynges.
 Furthermoze he admonisheth the christian women that they contemne not
 their husbandes though they be heathens, but study by their owne maners
 to prouoke them vnto better. He warneth the husbandes to beate with
 their wyues, and to absteyne somtymes from hauing to do with them, so as
 they may the moze apply them selues to prayer. Than he prouoketh men af-
 ter the example of Christ, to suffre displeasures, and not to ymagine howe to
 requyte wronge with wronge, but to deuise howe to ouercome their euill
 doers with softenes and well doynge. And these matters he treateth of in
 the thre first Chapters and in the beginning of the fourth. After these he ex-
 horteth men vnto newenesse of life and dissuadeth from the heathens
 vices. He allureth men vnto sobrenesse, vnto watching, to continual
 prayers, and aboue other vnto mutuall charytie vnto hospitali-
 tie and to do good turnes one for another. Agayne he enticeth
 men patiently to suffer persecucions, layed vpon them
 for Chyistes name sake. Than he informeth bishops,
 and in them the people vnder their charge. In
 the ende he reporteth that he wrote an other
 epistle vnto them by Siluanus, which
 was loste. This epistle it appeareth
 he wrote from Babilo, for in the
 name
 of that churche he saluteth them, if
 any man allowe not the
 vnderstanding of
 Rome by Ba-
 bylon.

The paraphrase of D. Erasmus of Roterodame vpon the first Epistle of S. Peter.

Peter an Apostle of Iesu Christ, to them that dwell here and there as strangers thozout Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithinia, electe accordyng to the foreknowledge of God the father thozow the sanctifying of the spirite vnto obedience, and spynchlyng of the bloude of Iesus Christe. Grace be with you and peace be multiplyed.



Peter somtyme a disciple and a contynual guest, but nowe an Embassadour and Apostle of Iesu Christ, to all them that dwell here and there in the coastes of litell Asia, at Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, and in that parte that is properly named Asia, whiche the Ephesians haue, and Bithinia, whome either the stormy tempestes of wartes haue in tymes paste scattered abroade some to on place some to an other, or elles whome the raging crueltie of them, which hated the name of Christe, hath guilelessly dyuen out of the places where their fathers dwelt befoze them: and are by that meanes nowe comfortles amonge straunge nacions, as it were banysht men, being in dede foze feare of men, thrust out of their natyue countrey, but yet not excluded ne banysht, neither depyued frome the offyce of Ghospell preaching, which God the pynce of al men bestowed chiefly vnto the lande and nacion of Jewes, after suche a sorte, that he woulde foze al that haue it commune to all them, whome soeuer he hath chosen. foze lyke as those are neuer the better foze being borne and leading their life at Hierusalem, which set naught by the doctrine of Iesu Christ: euen so shal it defraude no man, in that he dwelleth amonge the vncircumcised and prophane Gentiles, so that in stede of Moses lawe he embrace the grace of the ghospell. foze it is not the obseruacion of the lawe, wherwith the Jewes are communely punished by, that bringeth true saluacion, neither kynredde or place, but the free eleccion of God. He is a ryght Jewe in dede, wiche what countrey soeuer he dwell in, or what kynred soeuer he is borne of, acknowlegeth Iesu Christe to be the autour of true saluacion, which dyed not foze one nacion of people alone, but foze the whole vniuersall worlde. But in y^e we so acknowlege him, we are not endebted to the merite of obseruing the lawe, but vnto the free goodnesse of God, whiche chooseth out of al maner of nacions, & calleth vnto the lyberal fredome of the ghospell, whome soeuer it standeth with hys pleasure to call vnto it. foze it neither came of late sodaynly in to hys mynde, to saue al maner of mortall men by thys meane, ne yet enforced with our wel doinges, he layth this by as a reward foze vs, as though we had so merited, but this was decreed of god the father by his eternal counsaill, that he would open the pozte of saluacion, not to the Jewes only, but to al nacions vniuersally: not by circucision, not by keping y^e custome of the sabboth, neither by choise of meates, ne yet by other ceremonies of Moses lawe, which are corporall matters, & nothing but certain shadowes of spiritual thinges that were geue foze a time: but by true sanctificacion of the spirite, which the spiritual lawe of y^e gospel geneth vnto vs, by y^e which we are truly purged
in dede

in dede from all oure synnes, not soz because we haue obserued the prescrip-
 tures of the olde law, but because we playnly & readily put our trust in
 the promisses of the ghospell: not by sprinkling of the blood of a calfe, as
 it hath been hitherto wont to be done accordyng to the custome of the law,
 but by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the vndefiled and most ac-
 ceptable sacrifice to God, Iesus Christ: whose vnderferued death wyppeth
 cleane awaye from vs, all the transgressions of oure former conuersacion
 once soz al, and after we be bozne a new, as it were, into him thzough bap-
 tisme, it restozereh vs vnto a new life. And sozasmuch as baptism hath ex-
 empted vs from this world, & engrafted vs into the participacion of hea-
 uenly rewarde, I will not pray soz those goodes (in getting and heaping
 together wherof the toylers of the world thinke theselues fortunat) but
 those goodes rather, which purge vs cleane from erthly contagious in-
 fections, and make vs worthy the pynce of heauen Christ: that is to say,
 Grace, that in distrustyng your owne merites, and in puttyng no confidēce
 in the ceremonie of the lawe, you may looke soz true saluacion of the fre
 bounteous liberalitie of God, and in puttyng vnfayned trust in the ghos-
 pell: And besides this I wishe Peace, that beyng frely reconciled to God
 by the blood of Christe, you may haue concozde both among your selues
 and with all other, not only hurtynge no body, but also perdonyng other
 mennes fautes, and requiryng good turnes soz euill: the chaunce of
 whch goodes lyke as you haue frely receyued of God, euen so it stādeth
 you in hand to apply your selues vnto godly studies, that you may waxe
 riche in the encreasing vsury of good workes, more and more, not onely
 persistyng stedfast in that you haue begonne, but also goyng forward day-
 ly better and better, vntill the day come wherin the rewarde of immorta-
 litie shalbe openly geuen, wherof you haue now conceiued a certayne assu-
 red hope out of the ghospell of Christe, that we should therby chalenge
 no prayse vnto our selues.

Blessed be God the father of our Lorde Iesus Christe, which accordyng to his aboun-
 dant mercy begatte vs agayne vnto a lyuely hope (by that that Iesus Christe toke agayne The texte,
 from death) to an inheritaunce immortall and vndefyled, and that pertynerh not, reser-
 ued in heauen soz you, whiche are kept by the power of God thozow faith, vnto saluaci-
 on, which is prepared already to be shewed in the last tyme, in the which ye reioyce, though
 now soz a season (if neede requyre) ye are in heuynes, thozow manyfold temptacions, that
 the trespall of your faith beinge muche more precious then golde that perymeth (though it
 be tryed with fyre) might be founde vnto laude, glozy and honour, at the apperyng of Ie-
 sus Christe, whom ye haue not seen, and yet loue hym: in whom euen now e, though ye see
 him not, yet doe you beleue, and reioyce with ioy vnspeakable, and glozypous receyving the
 ende of your faith, euen the saluacion of your soules.

Soz this so passing a great benefite, his liberalitie is to be praysed, of
 whom by Christ cometh vnto vs, whatsoeuer it be that maketh vs truly
 blessed. And that is not Moses, but God himselfe, & the same the father of
 our Lorde Iesus Christ, which (whan we were lytle fortunatly bozne of
 Adam, that is to say bozne to synne, bozne to death) hath begotten vs new
 agayne into innocencie, and hath begotten vs vnto life that neuer shall dye,
 beinge prouoked by no merites of ours, but stered frely of his owne mer-
 cy wherin he most chiefly exceadeth: and this hath he done not by payde
 of Moses lawe, but by the costeous gyft of his owne sone Iesus Christ,
 whom he would haue to suffre death, to thintent, where we were els de-

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon

perate wretches, he might diluier vs frō the tyranny of synne & death: And him he called anon frō death to lyfe, that we beyng in this woꝛlde dead to woꝛldly lustes, & hauing remembraunce as it were before our eyes of the resurreccō, after his exāple in vpꝛightnes of conuersacion, might haue an assured & a ready hope, that we also shal once be exempt out of these sorowes & atteine with Christ vnto y euerlasting enheritaunce, whiche lyke as he beyng our head hath already atteyned, so shal al we also folowe as many as be engrafted to y mēbres of Christ, & are made woꝛthy by folowing of his exāple, to be called his brethren, & the chyldꝛe of y selfe same father that he is: that like as we suffre commune afflictions with him, so should we haue reward also together w̄ him. As long as we were the somes of the synful Adam, an infortunate enheritaunce abode vs. But as sone as we were made y somes of God, we make spedy haste to y enheritaunce of heauen. For it besemeth, y seing we are borne from heauen, we should behold heauēly thinges, & seing we are borne of God, we should folowe nothing but godlines. They y serue the woꝛld goe about to haue rewardes y are transitoꝛy & wage that is slyppery: but for vs there remayneth y happye enheritaunce after these temperal afflictions, which can neither be cozrupted w̄ death, ne defiled w̄ wearines oꝛ heauines, ne yet fade away by age oꝛ Nuttishnes. There is no cause for vs to be afrayed of, lest any man should in the meane whyle take this so plenteous an heritage out of our handes. We haue an assured saythfull promyse maker: And in his hādes it is safely kept & layed vp in stoare for vs in heauen: howbeit after suche sorte, that for al that there must an assured hope, and as it were a certayne pledge remayne in the meane time with men vpō earth, not with al maner of men, but w̄ you & such like as you are, vnto whom the spīrite of Christ is geuen in steede of a gage: & which, albeit ye are for y time tossed on euery syde w̄ sondꝛy stozmes of sorowes, y the frailtie of mā is vtterly vnhabable of himselfe to beate out, yet by the succour of God, which is mighty in al thinges, you are preserued, not through your owne merites, but by sayth & vnfaigned trust: wherby you dout not, but frō the last time, after y which there shalbe no moꝛe of this confusion of humayne matters, but the euill mē being appointed to their tormentes shalbe hab'e to do no body harme, & the good being safe frō al inuasions of sorowes shal haue the fruisiō of euerlasting rest. For now y rewardes lye hidde, & many times after the comune peoples estimaciō, thei are in wurse condiciō y be of y better, & those seme to perish which are most specially in sauegarde, & thei seme to flourish which most chiefly goe to naught. In this woꝛlde there is time to exercise godlines, & the reward hath his time prescribed vnto it, which it behoueth not to preuēt. In y meane seasō let it be ynough for vs, y euerlasting felicitie is kept in sauegarde for vs, which neither mannoz deufl can be hab'le to take away frō vs before hād, so y we shynke not from y sayth, wherby we pught to condēne mortal mens matters, & depende wholly of heauen. Let there be in y meane seasō feerce folkes, which being rebels to god, trust to the aydes of y woꝛld, let thē for y time stampe & stare ouer you as though you wer ouercomē & left succourles. But whan y day shal come, & the discourse of thiges turned by side down, they shalbe tormēted, & you shal refoyce like cōqueroꝛs, yea you ought to reioyce euē now also through y vndoubted lokig for of so passig a great felicitie. For it ought not to seme

buto

vnto you a greate or a greuous matter, though by afflictions and griefes that are but shoyte and shall soone haue an ende, you come to the bluffednesse that neuer shall decaye. And perchance these persecucions also shall once haue an end, which not withstanding as often as they come in vze, are to be borne with a myghtye stoute stomake, and without dismayng for the glo:yp of God, in hope of the lyfe to come. For after suche wyse doeth the wysedome of God in prouiding for your commodittes permitte, that the sinceritie and stedfastnes of your faith may be tried throughe sondry assautes of sorowes. For yf golde (which elles were a thing both lost and would goe to naught) be tryed out not only by the touche stone, but also is assayed by the fire, to thintente it maye thenceforth bee had in so muche the more pryce as it is the more exactly synd: much more wil God haue your faith, wherunto so high honour of duette belongeth, to be tried with sondry experimentes, to thintent that whan it shall glister out of these flames of sorowes and afflictions, and being farre more pure and more glittering than any golde though it be neuer so fyne, it may be p:ecious in the syght of God, and that all the matter at length may grow in to cleane contrary condicion: that is to wete, that the thyng which semed to be layed vpon you in this worlde vnto reproche, may chaunce vnto prayse: and that which semed vnto vilany, may be turned vnto glo:yp: that whiche semed to be layed vpon you to put you to dishonestie, may be turned in to habundaunce of honour in that day, whan Iesus Christ, whose power worketh nowe in you by secrete meanes, shall shewe forth himselfe openly vnto all men, and reudye vnto euery man rewarde accordyng to hys desertes. For what is a more glo:ypous thyng, than to be praysed of Christes owne mouthe: whan you shall heare: Come you blessed of my father: what thyng is more honozable than to be receaued of God the father into the felowshippe of the kyngdome of heauen together with the sonne: But thys glo:yp, although it shall be the comen glo:yp of all godly folkes, yet it shall chaunce more habundauntly vnto them, that haue suffered greater thynges vpon earth for Christes sake. Whiche rewarde in case they were nowe presently apparent, the strength of saythe shoulde bee no maruelous matter. But nowe the special chiefe prayse of good folkes consisteth in this point, that where you neuer sawe Christ with your bodyly cies, yet with the cies of sayth you see him and loue him: and wher as the violence of sorowes doeth openly & presently grate vpon you, but the rewarde, which are kept till a daye, doe not nowe appeare, yet puttyng assured confidence in hys promisses, you suffre these thynges with none other stomacke, than yf the glo:yp were presently furnyshed before your eyes, neither doe you suffre only with boldenesse, but also in the mydle of afflictions you reioyce with an vnspeakable ioy, beyng ful of glo:yp before God, that is to say, of a well hoping conscience, and full of a certayne vnfeyned confidēce, that where you suffre suche thynges vnderseuedly, you shall, by the will of God, habundauntly recepue a great fruyte of your sayth, that is to wete, the eternall saluacion of your soules. For it is a great vauntage, whan through the loosyng of the mortall body, the immortall soule is preserued. Thus it was decreed by the eternal counsaile of God, that menne should atteyne saluacion by these meanes, whereby euen Christe hymselfe came to euerlasting blessednesse.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon

The terte. Of which saluacion haue the 39 prophetes enquired and searched, which prophesied of the grace that should come vnto you, searchyng when or at what tyme the spyrte of Christe (which was in them) should signifie, which spyrte testified before, the passioes that should happen vnto Christ, and the glozy that should folow after: vnto which 39 prophetes it is also declared, that not vnto them selues, but vnto vs, they should minister the thynges which at nowe tyme shewed vnto you of them, which by the ho. y. gho. sent doune from hea- uen) haue in the gospel preached vnto you the thynges, which the Angells desire to behold.

For these matters are not by chaunce brought to passe at all auentures, but the selfe same thyng that we haue alreadye sene, the olde Propheetes (which prophesied before hand that you should be saued through faith and the grace of the gospel without the ayde of Moses lawe) haue diligently sought and searched out, not beyng contented to see as it were through a myste what should be to come: but they haue also with a godly curiositie searched out of the spirite of Christ, which than presently signified vnto the by secret inspiracion, what Christe should suffer, and vnto what excellent glozy he should byanby be aduanced vnto, than what or what maner of tyme that should come to passe: for so muche as they myndes were vehemently desirous of his sauing helth. And vnto them it was also manifested, that these thynges, which they prophesied before hand should come to passe, should not be exhibited in their tymes, but in yours: and the thynges that they opened in their prophesies, they opened vnto you and not to them selues. In dede they would haue wished to see, that you haue chaunced to see: but they prophesies were spoken before to thintent that we Apostles should be more certaynly credited, which declare nowe vnto you the thynges alreadye done, that they had spoken before hande should come to passe. And that you should also not stande in doubt, the same spirite of Christe in tymes passe taught them with secret still inspiracions, what he had determined to doe, which lately cumyng doune from heauen in fyre tongues instructed vs, to thintent we should be preachers in al the whole worlde of the thynges that are come to passe. For we preach Christ that became man for al our saluacio sake, was conuersaunt on earth, was afflicted with reproches and toyments, finally was nayled on the crosse, suffered death for oure sakes, and anon raised agayne to lyfe, was exalted vnto heauen, where now he glisteth in maiestie and glozy with the father (which before semed vpon earth to be but a vile rascal and an abiecte) and thither also will he exalte those that his be. These matters inasmuch as they were done by the vnspeakable counsaill of God, it is no maruell though the prophetes desired to see them, seying it is so excellently pleasant and acceptable a sight euen to the angels them selues to loke vpon, wth the beholding wherof they can not be fulfilled. The greater the benefite is which is offered vnto you, the more greedily you ought to embrace it, that it be not though your owne fault that you attayne it not. The rewarde is certayn, but it shalbe your dueties for all that, to behaue your selues so, that you seme not vnwoorthy the promises. The day that is looked for, wil come, which shal openly byyng forth the rewarde both of the godly and of the vngodly. It wyl come once, whansoever it shalbe, and it shal come pleasant and happy to suche as it shall fynde readyly prepared: on the contrary parte, it shal come fearfully to them that it shall fynde vnfairly:

full sluggardes and carelesly mynded.

Wherefore gyde vp the lornes of your myndes, be sober, & trust perfectly on the grace that is brought vnto you (by the declaring of Iesus Christ) as obedient chyldren, that ye geue not your selues ouer vnto your olde lustes; by which ye were led x hau as yet ye were ignorant of Christ: but as he which called you is holy, euen so be ye holy also in all maner of conuersation, because it is wrauen. Be ye holy, for I am holy. And if so be that ye call on the father, which without respecte of person iudgeth accordyng to euey mannes worke, se that ye pass: the tyme of your pylgrymage in feare.

And so inuche as Chyist woulde haue that daye to be vncertayn vnto vs, it behoueth you not to be in a securitie at any tyme, but alwayes hauing the lornes of your myndes girded, as menne readly furnished to mete theyr Loyses comming, watchyng and sober, being alwayes stered vp and put in mynde with the certayn and sure lokyng for of the euetlasting felicitie, which now is offered vnto all men that obey the Gospell: but yet it shalbe possessed at length, at suche tyme, as our Lorde Iesus Chyist shall openly shewe hys maiestie vnto al men and vnto angelles and deuiles, howbeit they shall not come to that immortallitie, but onely those that in a maner foecast the same in this worlde, and accordyng to the example of Iesus, being deade to the lustes of this worlde lyue agayne with him vnto innocencie, and contynue stedfastly in it, like lafull and right true sonnes that trust in the promises of god the father, and do after his prescribed commaundementes, and neuer slyde agayne into their olde conuersation, whiche than through the ignorance of the Gospelles doctrine, was eydaungered with worldly concupiscences. For it is conuenient that you diste from them in affectes and manners, from whom you dissent in profession. The worlde is naught and from it you are already exempted and engrafted vnto Chyist, which is righteous, holy and Innocent, and to this ende are you chosen and called of the father, the fountayne of al holynes, that like as you are in your profession, so should you in al your life and doinges, be pure, byright, and vnblameable. For the father will not acknowledge any to be his sonnes, but those that be like mannered vnto him. For in dede this same thing he ment whan he spake to our auncetours. Leuitici the xii. Chapter. Be you holy, for I the lord your God am holy. The puritie of Moses lawe could not haue ben ynough for you: to absteyne from touching of dead bodyes, to haue your fete washen, to absteyne from the acte of matrimony: God will haue all oure conuersation and all our whole harte to be fre from al spottes of synnes. For in dede these are the thynges, that make vs playnly impure in the sight of god. And although you cal vpon God by the name of a father, cryeng for his helpe in al thynges, yet if you lyue in a filthy conuersation, you may not trust that he will be mercifull vnto you, or acknowledge you for his chyldren, seyng he esteemeth no man epyther for his bynted or for his estates sake, but onely after the merites of his conuersation. For nether shal the Jewe be pure, if his conscience be defiled, ne yet shal the vncircumcised be vnpure, if he leade a godly and an innocent life.

For as muche as ye knowe how that ye were not redemed with corruptible thynges, (as silver and gold:) from youre vaine conuersation, whiche ye receaued by the tradicion of the father: but with the precious bloude of Chyist, as of a lambe undefiled, and without spotte, which was ordeyned before hande euen before the worlde was made: but was
The texte.
Declared

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon

declared in the last tymes for your sakes, which by his meanes do beleue on god, that rai-
sed him vp from death, and glorified hym, that ye might haue farthe and hope toward e
God, euen ye which haue purified your soules throughe the spirite, in obeying the truth,
with brotherly loue vnsayned, se that ye loue one another with a pure herte fetuentie, for
ye are borne a newe, not of mortall seed, but of immortal, by the word of god, which lyueth
and lasteth for euer. For al flesh is grasse, and all the glozy of man is as the flour of grasse.
The grasse wyddereth, and the flour falleth awaye, but the worde of the Lorde endureth
euer. And this is the worde, which by the gospel was preached vnto you.

Therefore it remaineth that you which are desirous to haue this father mer-
cifull vnto you, haue his vnauoydable iudgemēt alwayes befoze your eyes,
while you liue in this exile, & so order your cōuersaciō, that there be nothing
wherfoze the father may be offended, & iustly shut you out of the inheritaunce
of the celestial countrey, as vnnaturall & disobedyent children. The greater
the pryce is, wherwith Chyriste hath frely redeemed you, so muche the greater
hede ought you to take, lest for your wilfulnes and vnthankfulnes, you be
turned agayn into your former bonde thraldom. There is none moze mys-
erable a bondage, than to bee the slaue of synne. Those that for a litle money
are made fre frō theyr maisters bondage, & become of bondmē fre men, watch
about them by al meanes, lest for theyr vnthankfulnes they may be drawen
agayne into the bondage that they were in befoze: and will you than commit
that offence to fall again into yold tyranney, to be willingly the bond slaves
of Moses lawe, & had rather serue vaine obseruaunces, that your elders de-
liuered from one to an other vnto you, than to obey the gospel of God, seing
you knoweth that you were deliuered once from them, not with a commune
tryfling pryce, as golde or syluer, but with an offring muche moze holy than
Moses lawe knoweth of: For you are not made cleane with the bloud of a
calfe spynkled, but with the pzyecious bloud of Iesus Chyriste who like a labe
cleane without any spotte, pure and vndefiled from all filthinesse of synne,
was offred for our synnes on the aultare of the crosse. Nether yet was that
done by chaunce at all auentures, but the sonne of God was appointed to
make this sacrifice from euerlastyng and befoze the makyng of the wo:ld,
that he might throughe his death reconcile the father vnto vs: howbeit the
secrete deuice and decre of Goddes purposed mynde, which was many long
yeares vnknewen to the wo:ld, is now at length in these later tymes open-
ly manifested, and a new matter is set forth befoze mennes eyes to loke vpon
whiche in the purposed mynde of God was not new. And it was geuen for
your saluacion sake, vnto whom Chyriste that was made man, dyed, and is
preached, bestoweth thus muche, that wher as you had a bayne truste vpon
the ceremonies of the lawe, now distrusting your selues, you must put your
whole trust in God the father: who like as he would haue Chyriste to dye to
wype awaye your synnes, euen so hath he rayled him by from death, and
for the paynfull trauailes of this life which he suffred, he gaue him the glozy
of immoztalitie: to thentente that as you haue beleued that whiche he hath
done, in folowing his example, you might also trust surely to haue the same
reward to be bestowed on you, in that you put your whole affiaunce in God,
which what he hath already perfourmed in his sonne, the same also will he
vndoubtedly perfo:me in al them, which lyue after suche sort, that they may
be wo:thlyly accompted among the membes of Chyrist, in to whose body you
are engraffed, synce that you were regenerate throughe baptisme in to hym.
Befoze that tyme you did after your owne lustes, that is to say, embracing
carnall

carnall shadowes of thinges in steede of true ryght thinges: but now since you haue cleansed your soules, not with the obseruacion of Moses purging sacrifices, but in that you haue through faith obeyed the trueth of the gospel, whiche by the spyryte of Christe hath purged your consciences, you must endeuour your selues both to be correspondente vnto the head Christe in vprightnes of life, and be answerably like vnto the concoyde of the body by an excedyng and a playne brotherly and an vnfeyned loue among your selues: that lyke as Christe loued you not after a comen sort, nor after a carnall maner of loue, euen so should you loue euery one other, with a spiritual loue. Few kynred requireth new affection. Before this tyme you Jewes loued Jewes after a carnall affectionate loue, but now being by a far other maner regenerate (not of a mortall & an earthly seede after the bodye, but of an immortall and a heauenly seede by the worde of God which lyueth and endureth for euer whose gospel you haue beleued) you shall loue the brethren with a heauenly loue. Moses lawe was geuen for a tyme. But the worde of God hath brought forth the lawe of the gospel vnto vs, whiche neuer shall perishe. The thing that procedeth from men is but for a season, but the thing that cometh from heauen, is euertlasting, as Esay sayd before: *All fleshe is as grasse, and all the glory of man as the floure of the fildes. The grasse is withered, and his floure fallen awaye, but the worde of the Lorde endureth for euer.* This is the eternall worde of the eternall father, whom the shadowes of the former lawe in tymes past paynted out vnto vs, but now he is openly declared by the preachers of the gospel, and not onely vnto you, but vnto all them that receyue Christe with a syncre vpright fayth.

¶ The. ii. Chapter.

Whet sorte laye a spyde all maliciouſnes and all gyle, and saynednesse, and enuy, and all backbtyng: and as newe borne babes, desyre ye that mylke (not of the bodye, but of the soule) which is without disceite: that ye may growe there by (vnto saluacion) yf so be that ye haue tasted, howe gracious the Lord is, to whom ye come, as vnto a liuing stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God and precious: and ye as liuing stones, are made a spirituall house an holy priesthood, to offer vp spirituall sacrifices, acceptable to God by Iesus Christe.

The terte.



Eras muche as you are lately borne againe by an heauenly generacion through the doctrine of the gospel, caste all the vices of your former conuersacion quyte away from you, yf there were any malyce, yf there were any deceite, yf there were any holowe heartednesse, yf there were any enuy, yf there were any backbtyng or cursed speakyng, and from henceforth as babes newe borne, greedely couete that mylke, not of the body, but of the soule, the mylke that knoweth no deceyte, and is fitte for your age which is more harmlesse than strong, euen the mylke of the gospels ordinaunce. For the gospels doctrine hath his principles, it hath his infancy, it hath his dyet mete for weake tender age: it hath

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon

It hath also his farther growings, finally it hath his perfite growe age. Those first things are not to be supped lothesomly, but greedily, yea and thurstily: neyther yet must you lynge continually in them, but to procede from them stil vnto thinges of more perfeccion. For in dede it were euen a straunge thing if a man borne of his mother should be alwaies a babe and couet nothing els but mylke. And it behoueth you also to ware bigge, tyll you growe vnto perfite saluaciō, and not alwaies to stecke still in making the foundacions, but to ryse by lytle and lytle vnto the perfite buyldyng of the house. For in case (according to the psalme wyrters counsell) you haue tasted that the Lorde Jesus is swete, it is requisite for you to bee prouoked with that taste to sette your appetites vpon greater thynges. In humayne buyldynges, the stones neyther chaunge theyr place ne grow any bigger: But in this buyldyng (which standeth vpon liuing stones) the chiefe principall stone whereof, and the stone that conteyneth all thynges, is the liuyng and eternal Jesus Christe, whiche of late (after the psalme wryters prophesyng) was cast away of menne, that is to wete of the phariseis, who holding of their tēple that should go to naught, had no knowledge of this heauēly building, howbeit he was chosen by the iudgement of God, and had in muche price, there is nothing to hinder, but that it may procede forwarde to the perfite finishyng of the buyldyng. Therefore you must necessarily goe, through forwarde encrease of vertues, vnto Christ the liuing stone, the chosen stone, the stone preciously sette by in the sight of God, that you also being grounded vpon suche a foundacion may be builded vpon by lytle and lytle, vntyll you bee made spirituall temples muche more holy than the tēple that the Jewes brag of, and in the which temples muche more wholly priesthood is exercised than was vsed in that temple. For in it the leuites and priestes offered by beastes, but in these spirituall temples you your selues offer by spirituall sacrifices moste acceptable to God, who, as he is a spirite and not a bodye, so doeth he delyte in spirituall sacrifices, that you should nothing mynde the rites of Moses now being woꝛne out through the preachyng of the Gospell: in stedde of sundrye kyndes of brute beastes, you sea worldly and brutish affectes, lecherous lustes, pryde, wrath, enuie, desyre of reuengement, ryot, and couetousnes and in stedde of, incense, you offer pure prayers flying out of the aulter of a pure herte into heauen. These are the sacrifices that are offered at al seasons in the spirituall temple, and are at al tymes acceptably welcoue vnto God. For those sacrifices of Moses are now all ready growen in to a lothesomenes, as the prophet Esaye beareth recoꝛde. But these maner of sacrifices are contynually allowed through Jesus Christ, by whose commendacion the diligent seruite doinges of the Chrystians are acceptable vnto the father

The texte. Wherefore it is contayned also in the scripture: behold I put in Sion a stone robe layed in the chiefe corner, electe and precious, and he that beloueth on him shall nor be confounded. Vnto you therfore whiche beleue he is precious: but vnto them whiche beleue not, the stone whiche the buylders refused, the same is begunne to bee the head of the corner, and a stone that men stumbe at, and a rocke wherat they be offended, whiche stumbe at the woꝛde, and beloue not that, wheron they were set. But ye are a chosen generacion,
a royall

a royall p̄cioushod, an holy naciō, a people which are wronne: that ye shuld know the vertues of hym that called you out of darknes, into his mercifull lyght, which in tyme past were not a people, but are nowe the people of God, which some tyme had not obtrayned mercye, but nowe haue botayned mercye.

There is no cause why you should be in any mistrust, as long as ye cleave fast vnto the head Christ, as long as you stande hardy vpon the noble and vnmoueable ston Christ, of whom god spake in tymes past by the mouthe of Esay: Beholde I put in Sion a ston to be placed in the chief corner, tryed, chosen and precious. and he that shall put his trust in hym, shall not be ashamed. And that whiche he spake of before hand, we se now al ready perfourned. For the selfe same one ston was precious and holseome vnto some, and to some hurtfull and noysome, vnto you he is iustly precious, because you are grouded surely vpon him, because you put your whole trust in him, and are preserued by his ayde agaynste al stoyres of tempestes. But vnto them that had rather sticke still vnto Moses than vnto him, and haue reiected him, not willyng to haue hym put in the buylding that they purposed to buylde, he is contrary wise a reioche and a very destruccion. For him that they disdeyned to haue in their buylding, god wold haue to be head ston of the corner, by whom he might knyt together and conteyne as it were, the wall on either syde, that is to saye, both the sortes of people, of the Gentiles and of the Jewes: by whose strong defence the buylding should be safely preserued against all assaultes, & him should, who so ever were aduersaries vnto this new buylding. Stumble at and r̄ne against. And they stumble & holocuet be offended at the woꝛde of the Gospell, and beleue it not, seing Moses lawe made them ready before hande to this ende, that they shoulde beleue the gospell, as sone as the thing was truly performed in dede, that the lawe signified in shadow. Therefore those that haue disallowed Christ god hath also disallowed them agayne. But as for you, whom they reiecte with Christ, he hath made that chosen kynted, wherof Moses spake in tymes past, that holy naciō, and peculiar people, whom god hath take to him selfe w̄ an excellent price: that like as the people of the Hebrewes being deliuered in tymes past by Moses leading from the tyrannye of Egypt, and conueied thꝛough so many daungerous matters into the lande that they had long hoped vpon, preached vnto the woꝛlde the goodnes of god shewed to them warde: euen so you hauing in remembraunce his free liberalitie towardes you also, should glouise among al men the wonderfull power of god, which by a new meane hauing conquered the enemies of your saluacion, hath deliuered you out of the darknes of ignoraunce and vicious luyng, into his wonderfull light of the gospels trueth, by the which all the errours of the gentiles and shadowes of the Jewes are cleane wyped away. Vnto you therefore hath chaunced this honour, that they which persecuted Christ, surely reckoned vpon to them selues, & yet cleane contrary, the matters being turned vpside downe, the thing chaunced that Esay sayd before should come. The people which before were the most abiectes, that is to say, far of from god, is now a peculiar people vnto god. And the people whom god had reiected as unworthy of his mercy, hath felt by experience the mercy of god without helpe of circūcision of the lawe, and is receiued through the only gospellike faith into the fellowship of the sonne of god.

Dearely beloved, I beseeche you as straungers and pilgrims, abstayne from fleshly lustes, whiche fight agaynste the soule, and se that ye haue honeste conuersacion amonge the Gentyles, that wher as they backbite you as euill doctes, they maye se your good woꝛkes, and prayse God in the daye of visitacion. Submitte your selues therefore vnto all maner ofbynauce of manne for the Lordes sake, whether it bee vnto the

The paraphrase of Erasmus byon

kyng, as vnto the chiefe heed: other vnto rulers, as vnto them that are sent of hym, for the punishment of euil dowars: but for the laude of them, that do well. For so is the wyll of God, that with wel doing ye maye stoppe the mouthes of foolyshe and ignoraunte men: as for, and not as hauyng the libertye for a cloke of malicyousnes, but euen as the seruauantes of God. Honour all men. Loue brotherly felowshipe. feare God, honoure the kyng. Seruauntes, obey your masters with feare, not onely yf they be good and courteous: but also though they be feowarde. For this is thake worthy: yf a man for conscience towarde God endure greife, and suffer wronge vnderseued. For what prayse is it, yf when ye be buffered for your fautes, ye take it patiently: But and yf when ye do wel, ye suffer wronge and take it patiently, then is there thanke with God.

Chan sence ye acknowledge the singular liberalitie of god towardes you, whome he hath redeemed with the price of bloud, whome he hath reconlyed vnto himselfe by the deathe of his sonne, whome his will was to haue to bee the membyres of his onely begotten, and the lyuyng stones of the heauenly buylding, whome he hath chosen into the right of childzen, and called into the enheritaunce of immortallite: I beseeche you (dearely beloued) to frame poure selues in holynes of life like vnto your owne dignitie, like vnto the gentil goodnes of god, and vnto so hgh a rewarde. You are regenerate vnto heauen, being in this woorld as sojyners and straungers: make speede thither where your countray is, & where the enheritaunce of heauen is layed by in stoate for you: that you be not called away fro this desyre by earthlye and grosse appetites which with all manner of engynes make warre and bataill agaynste the spirite which is greedly desyous of heauenly thinges. Let your conuersacion accorde with your profession, that your maners may allure vnto Christe other folkes also that are paganes, among whome you lyue: vnto whome it is so muche requisite for you to geue no maner of occasion, that they maye rightfully iudge euil of the gospelles doctrine (yf they shoulde perceauie you in the commune custome of life to bee no whit better than other be,) that the entier byrightnes of your maners and wel doing towardes all menne, may stoppe theyr backbyting reportes wherewith they speake euil of you, for malice that they beare to Christ, and for the hate of religion, whiche they suppose to be wicked superstition: whiche thinges euidently perceaued, they shal repent also, and acknowledge their owne errour, being inspired with the mercye of god, whan it shal please him, whiche hath chosen you, to draw them to him also: and that they maye than by your godly woorkes glorifie him, whome befoze they abhorred, because they knew him not. This woorld hath also an order of his owne, whiche by occasion of religion ought not to be disturbed, as much as may be sauing the gloyp of christ. Euen so Christ would haue you to be free from synnes, that you shoulde neuertheles suffer euery thing willingly for the gospelles busynes sake, obeying and submytting your selues not only vnto Christian magistrates, but vnto the heathen magistrates also: whether he be a kyng, you must obey him as most excellent in the publike autoritie: whether they be rulers, you muste obey them, as by whom being sent to trauail abroad, the king administreteth the matters of the comon wealth. Rather let it moue you, that they bee heathens, that they be Idolatours, but acknowledge their office that is necessary vnto the comone wealth, which consisteth of sondry kyndes of men and religions. For they beare rule with autoritie to restrayne offenders and wicked persones by feare of punishment, & to allure those that bee good with rewarde to doe theyr duetie. You haue not nede of their feating, inasmuch as you do of your owne accorde moze than mans lawes require. They haue
no nede

no nede of mannes commendacion, whom the rewarde of heauen maketh feruent: and yet it is requisite also to acknowledge them with the other. For this is the will of the most hyghe God your Prynce, that you geue none occasion vnto their inconsiderate ignoraunce, whereby they myghte pꝛoueably call the gospelles pꝛofession to blame, if they perceaued you to let naught by their auzortie. That whiche other doe for feare of the lawes, do you willyngly of your owne accorde, yea moze habundauntlye than other doe, that you maye declare youre selues to be ryght free men in dede. For he is free that of his owne mind and willyngly doeth as he shoulde doe rightly. God forbydde that you should abuse the pꝛetence of the gospelles veritie to synne moze licenciously. You owe not bonde seruice vnto men but inasmuche as you are the seruauntes of God, you shall submitte youre selues, for his glories sake, vnto all men gladlye and willynglye. If any duetic therfore, if any honour be ducly belongyng euen to them that be heathens, either for the publike office sake that they beare, or for affinitie sake, do that thꝛoughly vnto all men, lest they being anye whyt offended, be broughte moze farther of from the pꝛofession of the gospel: yet for all that, it is reason that you loue them specially, whom the commune pꝛofession hath made bꝛethꝛen vnto you. Feare God, whose eyes no man can begyle: And concernyng the kyng, there is no cause why you should be afrayed of him, sꝛing he is deadfull to none but to euyll doers, but yet acknowledge hys auzortie in those thꝛynges, that he exacteth of you without hynderaunce of godlynes.

He demaundeth custome, paye it him: he exacteth tribute, geue it him. That which those that be free ought to do to the Magistrates, though they be heathens, bonde seruauntes ought to do vnto their maisters: from seruing of whō baptisme maketh them not free. But they ought rather with greater reuerence to acknowledge them, not onely if they be good and sobꝛe men, but also if they be soꝛe men and harde sharpe men, lest peraduenture beyng offended with your frowarde maners doyng other wise than you ought to doe, they laye the faulte vnto the pꝛofession, and be dꝛyuen the moze farther of from it, whereunto they ought rather to be encensed and allured by your honest behauiour. Some wyl saye: It is a soꝛe mater to beare the tyzannye of Prynces, it is a soꝛe mater to abyde the crueltie of maisters: for Prynces spoyle, exacte, and punyssh: and may stricke wꝛth whyppes and buffettes all to teare them that are faultles.

These maters woulde ryghtly seme not worthye to be boꝛne, if it were ascribed vnto them and not rather vnto God. Their wickednes deserueth not thus muche, that these thꝛynges should be suffred at their handes, but so is the wil of God, that youre goodnes shoulde turne their malicioussnes in to the glorie of Christ. For after suche soꝛte is your pacience acceptable to God, whan beyng afflicted vnder seruery, you suffre neuertheles contentedly, not for feare of men, but for the glory of God. Communely there is no despyght moze impaciently taken, than whan men are not faultye.

But among Christians it is ferre otherwise, for among them like as euery one is the beste, euen so doeth he couet to be mooste acceptable vnto God. And the moze inwardely he loueth God, so muche the moze chearfullye he suffreth whatsoeuer appeteyneth to the gloꝛye of God. But what garmente were it, if you suffre whan you are buffeted for naughtye

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the fyrst

doyniges: The conscience of the faulte teacheth thys, that euery man can abyde his deserued pynes and holde his peace. But whan you suffre patiently the sorowes that are done vnto you for weldoinges, you come in fauour with God, for whose cause sake you suffre wyllynglye.

The text.

For hereunto verely were ye called: for Christ also suffered for vs, leauing vs an ensample, that ye shoulde folowe his steppes, which dyd no synne, nether was there gyfte founde in his mouth: which when he was reuled, reuled not agayne: when he suffered, he threatened not: but committed the vengeance to hym that iudgeth righteouslye whyche bys owne selfe bare our synnes in his body on the trece, that we beinge deliuered from synne, shoulde lyue vnto righteousnes. By whose stripes, ye were healed. For ye were as shepe going astray: but are now turned vnto the shepherde and byshop of your folles.

Your innocencie might disdainfully grudge at this, but that Christe being innocent suffered greater haynous pynes for your sake. This is your profession, vpon this condiction are you called into his body, that you myghte folow the example of sufferyng which he hath left vnto you, and entring in by the same fote steppes you might thrust in vnto euerlastyng glozy by the same way that he attened vnto it. What sorowe was it that he suffered not, whiche was crucified with theues: And what is more innocent than he which not only commytted no faulte at all, but also there was no maner of gyfte at any tyme found in his tongue: whā they bitterly reuled him, he gaue none euill wordes againe, but rather besought the father to forgive them.

Whan he was bounden, whan he was beaten, whan he was nayled on the crosse, he threatened no vengeance but referred all vengeance vnto the father, whiche iudgeth not of affection, but accordyng to iustice, Christe in the meane tyme playng the intercessour and not the on settour. As for vs albeitt we now folowe innocencie, yet with out naughtye synfulnes we had afore tyme iustely deserued the vengeance of God. But Christe, forasmuche as he was indangered with no synne, yet he carped the burthen of our synnes vpon his owne bodye that he myghte ease vs of oure burthen, and was offred on the trece of the crosse as a bzent offerynge for oure synnes, and by his vnderferued death he put awaye the deathe that was due vnto vs, that we shoulde in the meane tyme folowe the example of his death and resurreccion, and that being dead vnto our olde synnes and lustes, wherunto we were addicte and dyd seruyce, we shoulde lyue from henceforth vnto innocencie, vnto the which he being the fountayne of all innocencie hath consecrated vs, whiche hath taken oure wickednes him selfe, that he myght geue his righteousnes vnto vs. We had offended, and he was beaten: The fault was ours, and the punishment lyght cruelly vpon him. So by accordyng to Elyas prophetic, we were made whole by his stripes. Him therfore you are bounden to thanke for youre innocencie: and in that God imputeth not the synnes of your former lyfe, you are bounde to thanke his bondes, his scourgeinges, his woundes, his crosse and his death. For ye were scatted befoze tyme lyke shepe withoute a keper, stravyng some one waye some an other, as euery mannes phantasie ledde him, thynkyng you myghte lawfullye do whatsoeuer lyked youre selfe, but you are nowe conuerted from youre olde erroute vnto Christe Iesus the shephearde and Curate of youre soules. If you folowe hym in sufferyng afflictions of sorowes wythoute deseruyng, you shall throughe his leadyng come

come vnto the glory of immortalltie.

The.iii. Chapter.

Likewise ye wiues be in subiection to your husbandes, that euen they which obey not the word, may with out the worde be wonne by the conuersacion of the wiues, while they behold your chaste conuersacion coupled with feare. Whose apparel shal not be outward with broyded heere, and hanginge on of golde, ether in puttinge on of gorgeous apparell: but let the hid man which is in the heart, be without all corruption, so that the spirit be at rest & quiet, which spirite is before God a thing muche set by. For after this maner in the olde tyme dyd the holy women, which trusted in God, tier them selues, and were obedyent to their husbandes, euen as Sara obeyed Abraham, & called hym Lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do wel and are not afrayed for any terrors.

The text.



Nowe lyke as free men ought to allure þe pynces and publike magistrates, and euen so oughte bonde seruauntes to allure their maisters vnto the fauouring of the gospell, by their obedient diligence (whych purchaceth frendship in euery place) or in dede not to prouoke them by occasion, if peraduenture they be incurable: euen so ought the wiues also shewe themselves obedyent vnto their husbandes, not onelye yf they be Christians, but to them also, that haue not yet embraced the doctrine of the gospell. For in dede it maye possible come to passe, that suche as oure preaching doeth not strike, the entier byptryghnes, godlynes, womanlynes, sobryenes, chastitie, and sufferance of the wyfe, maye overcome and mollifie them, and in conclusion wyne them vnto Christ. For whan they shall perceauē theyr wyues maners, changed through baptysme, whan they shall see the examplar of true vertue in them, they shall peraduenture be enflamed, the affection of wedlocke not a lytell: forewardyng to the same purpose, that as they be felowes of one bedde, so they would mynd to be felowes of one profession. For sincere good demeanour hath very sharpe pryckes, whiche, yf a man do marke it nerely, byngeth to passe manye tymes, that carnall loue is turned into a spirituall loue. That maner of loue is occasioned by wel fauourednes of beawtie, and behauiour of apparel, helppng the fauour of beawtie forewarde. And behauiour is occasioned by the fayre godlynes of an entier good hearte, shynyng in her manners. Therfoze it behoueth not wyues, whiche haue professed Christe, to deuise howe they maye set forth themselves pleasantly in their husbandes eyes, after the comune custome, with theyr hearts craftly broyded, or with puttinge on of precious stones, or gold, and purple rayment, and with other trimmyng of the bodye, whiche is shewed outwardly. For what other thyng shoulde come of this gayre, but that they shoulde loue their wyues bodye for the vse of fleshely lust: And what a porcion of man is the bodye: This rather they ought to studie for, that theyr husbandes may be enticed by their goodly garnysed maners, and so to loue the secret hidden mynde and hearte, yf they shall perceyue her to be pure, and spotted wth no knacke of viciousnes: and if they shall see, contrarie to the comune maner of women, no lyght affection in that woman, which women commonly haue: no intemperance, no wyath, no enuie, no seeking of preeminence, no arrogancie, no ouerthwart bisbible bable, but a softe, mylde, tractable & gentyll spirit. This is an excellent and a gorgeous apparell in the eyes of God. By this maner of decking they muste chiefly deserue to haue their husbandes heartes.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first

By this kynde of wooing, euen certayne holy women in times past (which fixed their whole hope, not in flyppery and transitoiye thinges, but in God) set forth themselves to please their husbandes, not with gold or precious stones, or purple, but with sobrenes & obedient diligence, wherby the scarcenes of an husbandes disposition is most easly awaged. So Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lorde, where as she was hys wyfe, & not his dyudgcing hande mayde, but submitted her selfe vnder his subieccion for sobrenes sake. For althoughe it be not fitte for a man to vse a lordlynes towardes his wife, yet there is an autozitie, which if he in somthynges abuse, yet it standeth with the womans modestie to obeye in place. To be bryefe, lyke as they are Abrahams true and very right sonnes, that folowe the example of his fayth: euen so are you Saras daughters, which resemble y^e excellent good womans maners & manly substantialnes of mynde, trympnyng by your selues with good woorkes, & reposing all your trust in God: & hauing the fruition of his ayde, there is no cause at al, why you should be afrayed of womans frailtie.

The text.

Lyke wyse ye men dwel with them accordyng to knowlege: geuynge honour vnto the wyfe, as vnto the wcher vessel, & as vnto them that are heires also of the grace of lyfe, that your prayes be not hindered.

And as it is the office of matrones, with chaste obedience, & holy maners, and wyth mylde softenes to ouercome their husbandes: euen so is it your parte, O you men, in no wise to abuse your autozitie towardes your wyues, as mē playng the tyzannes, in that they submit theselues vnto you, but be rather so much the lesse lordely towardes them, in y^e they make them selves your handmaidens. They are companions of all your estates and thynges, what so euer befallerh. Let them perceiue you to be handsome men to lyue withall, & let your wisdom succour the frailtie of their womankynde. And the moze stronger you are than they in the strength of hert & body, so much moze it behoueth you to releue womens infirmite, that by your instruction & by your gouernaunce, they maye be made better, & as it were settyng aparte that kynde, they maye waxe manlye in gospellike godlynes. For they are not Christian husbandes, that haue wyues only to the vse of copulacion: but they ought rather to endeuour, that their wyues maye be theyr cōpanions in fastinge, almosededes dooing, of watching, and of prayeng: so that those women, which are called to the cōmune reward of eternal lyfe, as well as their husbandes, maye earnestly set their myndes to do these thynges also communely with their husbandes. In christian mariage, there is nothing, or in dede very lytle, to be geuen vnto voluptuousnes, & very muche vnto Godlynes. Wherin yf bothe parties will consent, and thereupon you restrayne frō bodily doale, your prayers shal not be interrupted. And prayes is a sacrifice wherewith god must be sacrificed vnto, euery dape.

The text.

In conclusio, be ye al of one mynd, & of one heart loue as bryth: be pitiful, be courteous (mke) not rebuynge euill for euill, or rebuke for rebuke: but contrariwise blisse: knowing that ye are thereunto called, euen y^e ye should be heires of y^e blessing. For he that doth long after lyfe, and loueth to se good dayes, let hym refraine his tonge from euill, and his lippes that they speake no guyle. Let hym eschewe euill and do good: let hym seeke peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lorde are ouer the ryghteous, and hys eares (are open) vnto their prayers. Agayne, the face of the Lorde is ouer them that do euill.

Wherfoze lyke as men haue some one kynd of peculiar offices, some haue other,

other, euen so this becometh euery one the rather to remembre him selfe, that he which hath professed Christ, ought to excel others in those thinges, that be matters of tried honestie. Howbeit this is the comine office of all men, & lyke as al haue one self same profession, & like as through baptisine you are engraffed in to one selfe same body: euen so let al be through conoord, of one self same mind. Let not age, estate, condition or sodry being in diuerse countres disseuer you a sonde, which thinges among others do many times ministrate occasion of hate and contention. But as for you, it behoueth you to be most fast ioyned together, seying all one baptisine hath regenerated you vnto God: seying you haue all one father in heaue: in alinuche as dependyng of one head Christe, you are members of all one body: and for alinuche as the profission of the gospel hath made you brethren indifferently, and for that cause sake the father of heauen hath called all me vnto all one rewarde of immortalitie without differēce, whether they be poore, whether they be riche, whether they bonde seruauntes, whether they be masters, whether they be husbandes, whether they be wyues, whether they be Jewes or gentyles. In this behalfe there is no difference at all, and therfore there oughte to be no disculsion nor highe stately loking.

For a greate deale moze shall Christian charitie, that humbleth it selfe, wyne, than auctozitie that exacteth. For there is no conoerde amonge meene that be arrogaunt, feare, & louers of their selues. If the members in a beastes bodye do succour euery one other, and in case any thyng chaunce to any one of them whether it be good or badde, euerye one of them retoneth it as their owne: and if those whom nere kynred of bloud knytteth together, are both glad and soyre for the comodities & discomodities of their kynskolkes: how much moze conuenient is it, & you beyng knytte together by so manye wayes, shoulde expresse this consent, to be touched with other mens wealth & sorowes, no lesse than with your own. So shall you expyressly shewe a right brotherly charitie, if those that be of the moze wealthy estate, disceine not them & haue not the worldes wealth, but be soyre for their euils, & to their powers succour the: if they that be in hygh power & auzozitie, presse not nor despise those that are of & lower sort, but wyth familiar gentylnes & good wordes apply them selues familiarly vnto their inferiours: & there may be an indifferent equalitie, & that christian charitie maye ioyne together those, & the state of the worlde hath disseuered. God forbidd, that you should be desirous of reuengement, seying it is your part to nourishe conoerde, not only with the brethren & suche as be godly, but also, yf it be possible, with all men. With those that good are, it behoueth to stryue who may do most good: & with the that naught are, to stryue in patient sufferyng, or in doyng the good also, by which meanes like as the vety wilde beastes are ouercome, eue so it somtymes mollifieth the malice of men, wherin was no hope of amendment. Be not you willing therfore, to requite wrong for wrong, or scoldyng for scoldyng. For so shall it come to passe, that you shall be euil also, in that you folow the raple of them & be euil: but rather recompense you a good turne for wrong, & good wordes for bad, & through your inuincible goodnes, you may ouercome & querthowe their malice. For god hath not called you to this ende, to haue & upper hand with naughtie dedes doing, & naughtie wordes speakyng, but & through your weldoyng vnto all men, & wel speakyng vnto all men you maye worshiply heare & ioyfull word: *Come ye blessed of my father, possesse the kingdome.* To do euil vnto good me, it is moze than & propyette of mad beastes: & to speake euil against them & speake wel, it excedeth & propyette of vile tongued ruffiōs.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the fyrst

To deserue well of them that deserue euill, and to speake well of them that be euill speakers and backebytours, is thoffice of Chyistian vertue. If any man thynke this an harde matter, let him heare the Psalmie wyttout enspired with the spirite of God, that commaundeth the very same: whofo is desituous (w he) to lottie lyfe, and to se good dayes, let him teftrayne his tongue from euell: lette him restrayne his lyppes, that they speake no deceate: let him eschewe euell, and doe good: let him seke for peace, and folowe it: for the eyes of the Lorde are vpon the ryghteous, and his eares are attentiu vnto their prayes. Contrarywyse, the countenaunce of the Lorde is vpon them that do euill. Therefore yf we wyll haue God to be liberally good vnto vs, let vs be good vnto all men: yf we wyll escape his vengeance, let vs hurte no body at all.

I wyll not heare the reason, that mans affection wyll perchaunce mutynously copen in this behalfe: If I doe not reuenge iniurie, the vnpunished libertie wyll prouoke many mo to do hurt. But there is nothyng, that shal kepe you moze safe from iniurie, than yf you eyther patiently suffre it, or els do good for wrong. There is none ende of harme doing, as often as wyth wretched encounterng one with an other, reuiling is made double throughe reuiling againe, and iniurie is made double iniurie, by iniurie doing agayn. If no man resiste, naughtynesse shall cease, or at least waxe faynt.

¶ The fyrst

Moreover, who is it that wyll harme you if ye folowe that whyche is good? Yes, happy are ye, if any trouble happen vnto you for ryghteousnes sake. Be not ye afrayed for any terrors of them, neyther be ye troubled, but sanctifie the Lorde God in your heartes. Be redy alwayes to geue an answer to euery man that askerth you a reason of the hope that is in you, and that with mekenes & feare, hauing a good conscience that wher as they backbyte you as euill doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conuerfacyn in Chyriste.

Who would couet to doe harme, yf you studye to do good for all men, and to hurte no man? But yf there be anye found so vnterly blynd, that for malyce they beate to vertue or throughe ignoraunce do persecute you, I praye you, in what thing can they hurt you? They wyll take awaye youre money, whiche yf they were not, you must shortly leaue behynd you: they wyll torment the body, and wyll slea you, which shoulde shortly dye, yf they were not. All these thynges, forasmuche as they are done vnto you for Godlynes sake, shall not onely byng no damage vnto you at all, but also greatly encrease your vauntage.

By these euell turnes doyng, they augment your rewarde of euerlastyng felicitye. He that loseth a good meanyng hearte, he is hurted in dede: but whan that is safe, all is gayne, whatsoeuer the worlde thynketh is losse: and it is blessednes, whatsoeuer they thynke is sorrowfulnesse. Therefore it is in you to byng to passe, that no violence of sorowes can do you harme by any waye.

Whatsoeuer the naughtynesse of men shall take awaye from you, the free larges of God shall restore it agayne with exceeding great vauntage. So that yf you haue the crucicion of God, you haue no cause to be afrayed of mens threathnynges, or to be disquieted with the violence of sorowes, neyther be you troubled in your mynde, in the myddes of the sorowes of afflictions, as though you were destitute of Goddes helpe. Neither speake you cursedly vnto men that punishe you throughe ignoraunce, but rather glorifie you the lorde God in your heartes, whiche to his seruauntes turneth all thynges in to the best, wherthsoeuer chaunseth ioye or aduersitee. Therefore he is euer worthy to be prayed

prayed, albeit a man can not alwaies with woꝛde of mouthe yet with affection of the heart he maye euery where, and at all tymes. Hys enemyes are not to be prouoked with scoldynges, but wheresocuer anye hope shall offre it selfe, that they maye be drawen vnto Chyriste, be you prompte and ready to answer who soeuer desireth to knowe, with what confidence, and thourghe what hope, you set naught by the commodities of this life, and suffre the incommodities so patiently. And that do you not disdeigne fully, no; tauntynglye, as though you were offended at them, but with al mildenes and reuerence, that is to say, vsing a good conscience of your owne, althoughe you can not be hable to perswade them. For it is not ynough for Chyristians, to speake thinges that are true and woꝛthy of Chyrist: but also to speake after suche sorte, that the verpe reason of your talke maye declare, that you are not in hande with your own busines, but that you respecte the gloꝛie of Chyriste, and the saluation of them, whiche you speake vnto. This shalbe the surest argument to make them ashamed, which stande your conuersation, that you leade accordyng to Chyristes doctrine, as though it were a countrefaict and a naughty conuersation. For countrefaict vertue, althoughe it otherwise begyle men with his iuggling, yet whan it cometh once to suffering of punishmentes, it breaketh out and bewrapeth it selfe. There is nothing but a good conscience, and a conscience that dependeth wholly of God, that is hable chearefully to beare all thinges, and to be so farre fro intending reuengement, that he goeth about also to do good to them, of whom he is punished.

For it is better (yf the wyll of God be so) that ye suffre for well doing, then for euil doing. For asmuche as Chyrist hath once suffered for synnes, the iust for the vniust, so bring vs vnto God, and was killed, as pertainyng to the fleshe: but was quickned in the spirit. In which spirit he also went and preached vnto the spirites that were in prison, whiche somtyme had ben disobedient, when the long suffering of God was once looked for in the daies of Noe, while the Arke was a preparing: wherein a few, & is to say, viii. solies, were saued by the water, lyke as baptisme also now saucth vs, not the puttyng away of the fylth of the fleshe: but in that a good conscience consenteth to God, by the resurrection of Iesus Chyrist, whiche is on the righte hande of God: and is gone into heauen, Angellyes, powers, and myght, subdued vnto hym.

The text.

Let it not moue you, that you harmeles folkes suffre sorowes at their handes, whiche be harmedoers: but rather it is in that behalf the moꝛt easely to be borne, whatsoeuer is done vnto you. For it is better for you, if it be the wyll of God, that you suffre these thinges that you suffre, for wel doing, than for euil doing. For he that is punished for his euil dedes, suffereth that he hath deserued: but the punishmentes that you suffre, turne to the gloꝛy of Chyriste, and to the heaped encrease of your felicitie. It is a gloꝛious thinge for you to followe the example of your pynce. Thus he aduanced the gloꝛy of God the father, he being all together without synne, was taken, bounden, beaten, spytte vpon, crucified, and dyed for our synnes, where as he had no synne at all. The wylghtuous, for the vntwylghtuous, the faultles for the faultye, suffered paynes, gladly obeyng the fathers will, that he myghte presente vs, that were synners, cleane and without spocte vnto the father: that we also following his example, shoulde lyue harmeles amonge harmedoers, and that we beinge made good shoulde suffre for the wealth of them that naught are. He dyed onely once for all, and for tynposall affliction was endowed with lyfe euerlastyng, that we beinge once redemed from synnes, shoulde not slide backe agayne to the same.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first

It is Christ than that hath made vs cleane, being deliuered to death for the weaknes of the humaine body which he had receiued, but he was raised to life agayne by the power of the spirite, whiche coulde not be ouercome wyth any afflictions. For the same tyme that his dead body was closed in the graue, he being alyue in spirite pearced vnto the helles: & lyke as vnto men endued with mortall bodye, he preached the doctryne of the gospell in his bodylye presence, which those that beleued, attayned saluacion, and those that refused to beleue, purchaced to them selues the heape of eternal damnacion: euen so his body being laied aparte, his spirite went vnto them, which being deliuered of their bodies, lyued in the helles, and preached vnto them, that nowe is the tyme present wherein they should receyue the rewarde of their godlines, for þ in tymes past they fearing the iustice of god, nether reuenged them selues of euilles, & liued faultles among the faultye: and declared, that they suffred condyng punishmentes, which in the daies of Noe, when the Arke was furnished, & the floude was loked for, that God being prouoked by mortall mennes wickednes would send vpon them, beleued not, but abused the gentilnes of God, when they sawe the thing, that he threathned, put of for a certayn of peares. Therfoze when the floude came, it destroyed all, except a very fewe, that is to saye, no moe but onely eight persons, which according to Noes counsel, went into the arke, & were not drowned in the floud. And therfoze euen in those tymes say he wanted not her rewarde. For God suffred not those to perishe, that trusted in him with al their whole hert. Neither can the vnbelleuers escape þ vengeaunce of God, although you be no reuengers. For it is ynough for you, that you obeye God, but as for the punishment of the rest, referte that to hym.

Nowe that, whiche Noes Arke was vnto them, is baptisime vnto you: that same thyng that the floud was vnto them, is the eternal punishment vnto the wicked, and preached vnto them, that obey not the gospell. It was ynough for Noe to haue tolde them of the floud that was to come: It was ynough to haue shewed, by what meanes they myght escape the dawninge, yf throughe repentance they would haue alwaged þ wrath of god, which they had prouoked vpon theselues by theyr own wickednes. And so let your vpryghtenes be ynoughe vnto you: let it be ynough for you to haue declared vnto other, what rewarde is prepared for them that beleue the gospell, & what payne abideth the vnbelleuers. If there be but a fewe saued by fayth, it shall not be layed to your charge. If a great part of men perishe throughe vnbeliefe, they perishe through their owne faulte. After this sorte it was the will of God, to vtter the difference betwene the good and the badde. Baptisime receiued as it ought to be, preferueth agaynst destruction, and washeth awaye the sylthynes, not of bodies but of soules. But baptisime being broken promise withall, destroyeth for euer, and wyndeth into so muche the moze haynous rageing streames of wickednesse.

Therfoze the thing that is saluacion to some hauing fayth, doeth bringe destruction to the vnbelleuers and suche as are rebellions agaynst fayth. Notwithstandinge it is not ynough for you, that through the floude of baptisime your sinnes are perished, and that wicked lustes of the former conuersacion are lost, onles they be present a good conscience also in all the lyfe after correspondent to the benefite of God. Christ died, howbeit but only once: he is risen again neuer to dye: and vnto vs the synfulnes of oure former olde lyfe are in lyfe lost slayne by the death of Christ, that we shoulde afterwarde lyue agayne to innocencie.

innocencie, and neuer flyde backe agayne in to synnes, as muche as lyeth in vs. That shall come to passe, if we shall, as it were setting moztalitie apart, desirously aspyre vnto þe countrey of heauen w al our whole hertes, the enheritaunce wherof abydeth them that obey the gospel. For so Iesus Christe rose agayne, that he would not make long tarynge after that vpon earth, but couered him selfe out of moztall mennes companye vp into heauen: and there hauynge the fruition of the glozy of immoxtalitie, sitteth on the fathers right hande, not w out a body, but suche a body as death hath now no title to it at all: And whyle death goeth about the swalowe by the innocente, it is vtterly swallowed by it selfe: and while death surely reconeth to haue gotten a great praye, it became a praye it selfe. Finally Christes victorie, is our victorie: and the glozy that went befoze in him, is shewed vnto vs, in case we continue styll in the thyng that we haue begon, and sticke harde in his foteeste ppes. Againste him the tormentes of the wicked preuailed nothing at all: but in his pacient suffryng of them he gate the victorie, he triumpheth and raigneth alofte, sittynge in heauen aboue all aungelles, or whatsoever vertue and power there is besydes. Vnto you he hath opened the waye into heauen, that by the same way that he entred in, you maye also thrust in thynke and treefolde into the same place. The enheritaunce is ready and certaine, the possession wherof he hath also entred for your sakes, so that you expresse your selues worthy of it: that is to saye, if you set your studies vpon the innocencie (which he hath frely geuen) to do good vnto all men, yea euen to the euyl and those that punyssh you, as much as vnto you pertyneth.

The. iiii. Chapter.

For as muche then as Christ hath suffered for vs in the fleshe, arme ye your selues lyke wyse with the same mynde: for he which suffereth in the fleshe ceaseth from sinne, that he hence forwarde shoulde lyue (as muche tyme as he remaineth in the fleshe) not after the iudges of men, but after the wyl of God. For it is sufficient for vs that we haue spent the tyme that is past of the life, after the will of the Gentils walkynge in wantones, iudges, in excesse of wines, in excesse of eating, in excesse of drynking (in dronkennes) and in abominable idolatry. And it seemeth to them an inconuenient thyng, that ye canne not also with them vnto the same excesse of riot, and therefore, speake they euill of you, which shall geue accomtes to him, that is ready to iudge quicke & dead. For vnto this purpose werde was the Gospel preached also vnto the dead, that they shoulde be iudged lyke other men in þe fleshe, but should liue befoze God in the spirit. The end of al thynges is at hand.

The text.



For as muche than as Christe your Prynce and head folowed not the pleasures of thys lyfe, but throughe suffryng of afflictions for a tyme came vnto the glozye of heauen, and scing that he hath conquered the aduersaries with the weapons of patiente sufferance: it is reason that you, which professe your selues to be his disciples, shoulde arme your selues with the lyke purpose of mynde. Innocencie of lyfe, is the most surest armour: and christian pacience is the kystrelle that can not be beaten downe. He that is gyded with pacience, is sure that no man can be hable to hurt him. Whosoever is deade together with Christ after the fleshe, hath so geuen ouer the synfulnes of his former conuersion, that he is playnly deade to humayne desyres, so that now he is not tickled with gredynes of renoume, he is not prouoked with de-

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the fyrst

lype of reuengemente, but all the reste of hys tyme, that is geuen hym in thys
sely carthas, lyue: h all together whole to the wyll of God, whom onelye his de-
lyre is to please, of whom also he lokethe for the rewarde of a good conscience,
and vnto him he referreth the vengeaunce takyng of the wycked. Whosoouer
is readily prepared to suffre martyrdome, is not touched with the pleasures of
this worlde. For thys he thynketh with him selfe: God forbode, that I beyng
once done vpon the crosse with my Christ, shoulde goe downe to the vices that
I haue forsaken: and that I beyng once appointed vnto euerlastyng felicitie,
shoulde be tombled backe agayne to this worlde's delices, whiche are not only
shorte, but also folysh: It is euen large ynough that I being a straunger fro
Christe, haue spent the tyme past in folysh lustes, whiche the prophane Hea-
thens do filthiely serue, beyng addicte and geue to wantones, to fleshly lustes,
to dronkenes, to excessyue banquetynges, and to abomynable image worshyp-
pynges. These pranks we are glad we haue left behynde vs, by the goodnes
of Christe: and as often as we loke backe at them, we shugge for feare to
remembre suche fylthynes of lyfe and so great blynde darkenes of ignoraunce.
Nowe in dedde of outragious luste, chastite is pleasaunte: for riote, tempe-
rate fare: for wynebybbyng, sobrietie: for superstitious worshyping of ima-
ges, true godlynes and deuoute worshyping of the lyving God, vnto whō
the mooste acceptable sacrifice that maye be, is a mynde pure and vnspotted
from all vncleanes of synne. Those that haue theyr blynde darkenes yet styll,
haue maruaile at this so great a chaunging of myndes and lyfe in you, and
thynke scoyne that their riotousnes is condemned by your temperate fare, and
that their lyfe (whiche floweth ouer with all kyndes of intemperaunce) is bla-
med by your honest byrightnes. They woulde loue the companions of these
fylthynes: but nowe they rayle vpon you, because your lyfe is not suche as
theirs is: but yet there is no cause why ye shoulde be moued at their raylyn-
gynges, neither are they to be rayled at agayne. Let it be ynough for you, that
you haue a good conscience before God. If you can by any possible waye con-
uert them vnto better, you ought to do your diligece: howbeit after such sort,
that you goe not backe from your own spucere byrightnes. If they do repent,
it is to be ioyed at: if their hertes be hardened, they rayle and scolde euen a-
gainst them that wyshe them well: referre you the vengeaunce to God, whose
iudgement no mortall man is hable to escape. For he in tyme shall iudge all
men, not onely the quicke, but also the dead: the quicke, whom Christ at hys
comyng shall fynde lyuinge in the bodye: the dead, whiche before Christes
comyng are departed out of this lyfe. Notwithstandyng none lyueth in
dedde, but he that lyueth vnto godlynes. Those that serue vices, and fylthye
lustes, are dead vnto God. And vnto him at his iudgement, those that be dead
in dedde, shall rendre accōpt, if they wil not repent from theyr vices. For he (that
moost equall indyfferent iudge) shall punyssh them for your sakes, and paye
you the full rewarde of your patient sustraunce. In dedde he is desirous that
all men reuue vnto gospellike godlynes, and for that cause sake, he woulde
haue the grace of the gospel preached, not onely vnto the Jewes, that lyued
deuoutly after Moses lawe, not onely vnto the Gentiles that lyued honestlye
after the lawe of nature, but also vnto the dead and bitterly buried in all kyndes
of naughtynes. And vnto theyr darkenes, he woulde haue the lycht of the
gospel to be layed: them he woulde haue taughte with all myldenens and paci-
ence.

ence, that they also awaking at length, myght contemne those thynges wherein being nowe blynde they repose their felicitie, and be reputed as dead in bodey with men, in that they are not entangled w any affectiōs of the body, but with God they myght lyue in spirite. For none is alyue in dede, in Goddes iudgement, but he that is after this sorte dede. There is nothyng of long continuance in this worlde, and the ende of all thynges shall hoierly come. And their voluptuous pleasures shall sone forsake them, and your paynesfull punishment shall sone haue an ende. And also euerlastyng ioye abydeth for you, and euerlasting tormentes abyde for them.

Be ye therfore sobye and watche vnto prayer. But about all thynges haue seruente loue among your selues. For loue shall couer the multitude of synnes. Be ye herberous one to another without grudgyng. As curye man hath receyued the gyfte euen so intiker the same one to another, as good ministers of the manifold grace of God. If any man speake, let hym talke as the wordes of God. If any man minister, let hym do it as of the habilytie, whych God ministereth vnto hym. That God in al thynges maye bee glorified through Iesus Christ, to whom be prayse and dominion for euer & euer. Amen.

The texts.

Therfore it standeth you in hande by all meanes, that that daye synde you not slugishly napping, noz carelesly snourting by riot and slothfulnes. But rather prepare your selues alwayes ready agaynst that daye, and be sobye and watching in continuall prayers. For it shall come vnloked for (so it is the will of Christ) but if it shall fynd thee in them, it can not chose but come happily. Sobrietie is an acceptable thyng to God, it is a sure mater to watche, for God doeth gladly heare the prayers that are set forthe by temperaunce and wat- chyng. But this is a thyng a greate deale most acceptable of all, that you em- brace euery one other with continuall and vehement loue, releuing euery one other with mutuall good turnes. So as he that is the more watchefull, maye sayse v by the drowlye snourtour: he that is the better learned, may instructe the lesse learned: he that is þ more diligente, may warne the sluggarde: he that is the more seruente, maye prycke v by the colde one: and he that is the more perfit, maye forgeue him that doeth amysse through infirmitie. For this byrnyng charitte towardes the neighoure, couereth the multitude of synnes, wherwith we are endangered to God. That whiche we offende agaynst hym, is verye well washen awaye by doynge good turnes vnto our neighbours. Lyke as e- uery one hath the fortune of habilitie, so lette hym studie to be good vnto hys brother. Let him that hath substaunce to do withal, geue himselte herberous, and bestowe vnto them that haue nede, not grudgynge, nether with murmur- yng, but gladly and chearefully, estempng himselte to receyue a good turne, whan he geueth, and that suche maner of losse of substaunce is a greate gayne with God, whiche shall repaye al with vphaped mesure. And thinke this more- ouer, that whatsoeuer you spende to the helpynge of youre neyghboure, is the good gyfte of God, geuen to this ende, that as it were hauing that chaunce of riches commytted to youre credence, you shoulde waxe riche in the vsurye of godly woikes. Vnto some God hath distributed some sondy gyftes: vnto some, other gyftes. Let no man take vpon him to haue that, whiche he hath, of hym selfe: let him thynke it to be Gods gyfte, whiche he would haue distributed by you vpon other, that of doynge good turnes one for an other, mutuall loue maye be glewed together amonge your selues moze and moze, and that there
myght

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first

might encrease by occasion vnto euery one the rewarde of godlynes. Let no man be discōtent with him selfe, in that he is not endued with this or that gift. Let no man also stonde in his owne conceit, in that he hath mo qualities geuen vnto him than other haue. For so it was the will of the ryche and lyberall gentill God, to bestowe his gyftes after sondry sortes. No man is Lorde of that whiche he hath receaued: he is nothing but the disposer: For the thyng that he disposeth, is the lordes. And yf he do that faithfully, chearefully and desirously, lette hym not loke for rewarde of man, inasmuche as he shall receaue it of God. If holosome doctrine chaunce vnto a man, if any man haue the gyfte of a fyne learned tongue, let him not abuse it vnto gayne, vnto pompeous statelynes and bayne glozve. but vnto the commoditie of his neighbour, and to the glozve of Christe. Let the hearers perceue his wordes to be the wordes of God, and not of men: and that he whiche speaketh is nothing els, but the instrumēt of the voyce of God. If any man be moze hable to haue ministracion of office than of Doctrine, let him administre his gyft, so, as he challenge not thautozitic vnto him selfe, but ascribe it vnto God, that geueth him power and strength to goe aboute the thyng effectually that he taketh in hande.

And that shall be done, to the intent that of gyftes diuersly distributed, and of offices diuersly gone about, God may be glozified on euery parte, of whom as of the wellspring we haue al thynges flowynge vnto vs, not by Moyses, but by Iesus Christe, by whom whatsoeuer the father geueth, he geueth it vnto vs, as his only sonne. Vnto God therfore shall he ascribe the dede, that is holpen by his brothers good turne: vnto God shall he rende the thankes, whiche is glad that his brother is holpen by his ministerie. So that y total summe of al glorie redoundeth on euery parte vnto God the father and the sonne, vnto whom is continual glorie & dominion for euer world without ende. Amen. We ought not in this behalfe to seke after glozve, but it behoueth vs to remembre our dutie, wherwith we may please God. Concerning the rewarde let hym alone with all that we put our truste in. For he shall turne the persecutours malice into pour good, he shall change pour paynful sorowes into gladnesse, & pour reproche into glozve.

The xxxij.

Dearly beloved, maruaile not that ye are proued by fire, which thing is to trie you, as though some straunge rying happened vnto you: but reioyce, in asmuche as ye are partakers of Christs passion: that when bys glozve appereth ye maye be merry and glad. If ye be rayled vpon for the name of Christ, happy are ye. For the glozve and the spirit of God resteth vpon you. On their part he is euill spoken of, but on your parte he is glozified. Se that none of you be punished as a murderer, or as a theefe, or an euill doer, or as a busy body in other mens matters. If any man suffre as a Christian man, let hym not be a wamed: but let hym glozifie God on his behalfe. For the tyme is come that iudgement must begin at the house of god. If it first begin at vs what shall the ende be of them which beleue not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saued, where shall the vngodly and the sinner appere: Wherfore let them that are troubled according to the will of God, comyt their soules to hym with wel doing, as vnto a saythfull creatour.

Therfore, dearly beloved, be not disquieted in y meane season as it were a newe matter, though you which shall be the felowes to gether of the kyngedome heauen, be tried with afflictions in this world, as gold is with fire. That thing ought to seme no newe matter vnto you, whyche wente long ago befoze in the triedly proued prophetes, and lately in Christe. It ought to be the moze easly borne,

bozne, in asmuche as you see it happen cōmonly vnto you with all the tried peo-
 ple of god. And seyng þ̄ in this behalfe you bepng disciples resemble your mas-
 ter, and bepng membzres resemble your heade Iesus Chyriste, ought to be glad
 and reioyce, þ̄ lyke as now he doeth vouchesaue to haue you companions of his
 afflictions, euen so afterwarde, whā he shal open his maiestie vnto al men, & ha-
 uing made them ashamed & astonied, þ̄ afflicted him and you for malice of him,
 you shal reioyce with vnspeakeable mitthe, which may be felte, but not expressed
 with wordes. In the meane season, yf men teuple you, howe soze soeuer you are
 afflicted in bodye, not for your owne naughtye dedes, but for the profession of
 Chyrist, yet in this behalfe you are blessed, that euen in þ̄ middes of your tormen-
 tes, & in the myddes of your dispightfull handlinge, the gloriose spirite of god
 is kyndled againe in you for your harmeles harte & good conscience sake. It is
 a swete thing to suffer w̄ Chyrist, and it is a gloriose thing to suffer for Chyrist.
 For as muche as in them lyeth, they reuile eue Chyrist himselfe, howbeit your in-
 nocencie, & your pacient suffraunce causeth it to chaunce vnto his glozpe. But
 God forbiddē, þ̄ any of you should be punished for manslaughter, or theft, ey-
 ther for naughty wordes speaking, or for curious meddlyngc of those thinges
 that pertaine nothing to you. For it is þ̄ cause & not the tormenting þ̄ maketh a
 sharter. And whosoever suffreth for none other cause, but þ̄ he is called a Chri-
 stian, he nedeth not to be ashamed of his punishment. It is a shame to be called
 a thefe: but it is a gloriose thig to be called a Chyristiā. Blessed are they, whiche
 (though it be after that painful sozte) may escape the tormentes of hell fire: and
 that through afflictions þ̄ shall endure but as it were þ̄ space of a moment, haue
 passage geuen them vnto toyes that shall neuer haue ende. Wherunto God ad-
 mitteth none, but him that is notably proued and tried by muche suffering of so-
 rowes. Once he shal practyse dreadfull iudgemēt, whā the tyme of mercy is past,
 wherat euery one shall be rewarded accordig to his desertes. In þ̄ meane while,
 þ̄ iudgemēt is moze easye, inasmuche as bepng purely tried by tēporal tormētes
 we are made woorthy of þ̄ felowship of Chyrist, whiche wil allow nothing but the
 thinge that is most pure and most perfectly scawred from dyssol. Nowe is the
 tyme, that this iudgement be exercised, to thintent it maye moze evidently
 appere, who doe trulye put their truste in God, and whoe doe trulye
 loue Chyriste in dede. Thinges bepng in prosperous and quiet estate are not
 argumētes of true godlines. As for holes ceremonies, euen a very hypocrite
 maye kepe them, but as for losse of goodes, reuilinges, emprisonmentes, stripes,
 and death, no man taketh paciently, but he þ̄ hath an inuincib'le faith toynd w̄
 a gospellyke charitie. And vnto these, let thē readly prepare them selues, that
 wil in tyme cōming reigne w̄ Chyrist. This iudgemēt shall beginne at þ̄ house of
 god, whiche is the congregacion. Than yf it be nedefull for vs to be so clen-
 sed, whiche beleue the gospel, and liue vprightly: what ende, what iudgemēt, what
 payne abideth them, that haue no constaunt belefe in the gospel, and continue
 styl in their owne wickednesses? Yf they be so tryed, whiche with single plaines
 obeye the gospel, and hauynge forlaken all the pleasures of this woꝛlde,
 haue geuen ouer them selues to the studie of godlynes: what shall become
 of them whome the preachinge of the gospel hath made woꝛse? And
 yf they whiche lyue iustly, knowinge themselves giltye in none cypil, atchieue
 not (with out peryll and muche a doe) the poꝛte of eternall saluacion: In what

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle.

hope shall the wicked and mischeuous doers shewe their face in so straight and so dreedefull a iudgement: Therfore they maye in no wyse hope to get any saluacion there, to thintent that they also whiche are toymented in this worlde, not for euil doynges but for the wyll of God, must not trust to them selues, but to their possible powers exercysinge þe wykes of godlynes, they shoulde after this soyte put their soules in the handes of God their maker, who of his goodnesse wyll not suffer it to peryshe that he hath made, yf they continue in well doyng to deathe, and yf they wyll haue none affiaunce in their owne merites, but loke for rewarde of his bounteous lybetalitie.

¶ The .v. Chapter.

The text.

¶ The elders whiche are among you, I exhorte, which am also an elder, and a wirnes of the afflictions of Christ, and also a partaker of the gloze that shalbe opened. fede ye this flocke, asmuche as lyeth in you, taking the outspight of them, nor as compelled thereto, but wplyngly: after a godly soyte, nor for þe desyre of wythy lucte: but of a good minde, not as though ye were lordes ouer the parishes: but that ye be an ensample to the flocke and that with good wyll. And when the chere wyperde shal appeare, ye shal receaue an incorruptible crowne of gloze. I yken yf ye yenger, submit your selues vnto the elder. Submit your selues euery man one to a nother, knet poure selues together in lowlynes of mynde. For God resisteth the proude, and geueth grace to the humble.



Endeuour your dilygence vnto this, byethzen, bothe euery one seuerally by your selues, and all together in commune, that folowynge the focestepes of Christ, you may attepne vnto his felowship. Howbeit it is reason, þe those, whiche exceude other in auctoritie of age, should exceude also in the study of godlynes. Of their example, of their maner of teaching, and of their auctoritie dependeth the resydue of the multitude. And it is not inoughe for them, to lyue vpyghly themselves, excepte they be carefull for the multitude also. For vnto them, their graue head augmenteth auctoritie, vse of thinges augmenteth wple-dome, and long proued & tried vprightenes of lyfe augementeth their credence. You therfore I speake to, you elders, the keepers of the people, beyng an elder also my selfe, whiche haue perfozmed in mates & in dedes, the thing þe I teache, that is to say, in sufferng enprisonmentes & stripes for the name of Christ sake, beyng ready also euen vnto þe crosse, whā the wil of God so shal be, & in like maner hauing this very good hope, þe whom he hath vouchesafe to haue suffer for his sake, he wil admitte also the same vnto þe felowship of the gloze of heauen, as sone as þe day shal come, wherin he shal openly declare his wpatentie vnto the world, & þe wrastringes of þe world being at an ende, þe rewardes shalbe brought furthe. I beseeche you for þe toymentes sakes þe Christ suffered for you, & for myne afflictions sakes, wherin I folowe my lord to myne vntermost power, shew your selues right feders of þe multitude in dede, as it is charged to euery mans lotte, wathe, walke about, loke on euery syde, & take hede, þe nothing wante vnto the flocke, for whome Christ died, nether holy conso lation, nether holsome doctrine, ne example of gospellyke lyfe. You are called *Superintendentes*: accomplishe in dede þe thing þe you are called. fede, cure, gouerne, kepe, þe nothing perishe, þe nothing runne out of þe way. And see þe you doe þe, not grudgingly, as me cōstrained through feare, either shame, or necessitie of office: but w dilygēt readines, gladly, & w a good wil, respectig nothing elles, but what may be acceptable to god.

¶

It is his bulynes that you take in hande, and of him you shall receiue euerlastinge rewarde. Loke not for rewarde in this lyfe. It is a shame, to take charge of christian people for vauntage sake: whiche charge no man is praysed for takinge, but he that dooeth it of his owne accorde and frely without any thinge. That man is fallen out of the rewarde of heauen, that hunteth after the hyze of his office at mennes hardes here in this woylde. Next vnto this it is, yf any man, though he set naught by lucre, yet seketh ambitiously after honour and dignitie, being desyrous to be a commaunder, beyng desirous to be reuerenced: that man shall haue no rewarde also with God. He hath receaued his rewarde: The office of a right byshop is sette of from lordinge. It is not a tyrannye, but an administracion. A byshop is put in autoritie for this ende, not to scrape to him selfe the moze gayne therby, not to reigne a losse, and to vse his pleasure the moze frely, but to doe the moze good. Therfore you elders, remembre your office, behaue your selues so in all thinges, that your lyfe maye be an example vnto the people of a gospellyke conuersion. Let them learne of your behauiour to set naught by lucre, let them learne to despye dysdeignous statelynes, let them learne to hope for the hyze of their duties dooing at Christes handes, & to haue respecte to none other thing in this woylde, but because so it is honest, so is it acceptable to God. In the meane season playe the good shepherdes frely without any thing. Neuertheles in dede it shall not be doen for nothing: but whan the prince of shepherdes Iesus Christ shall in thappointed dawe openly shew forth him selfe, whiche gaue him selfe wholy for his shepe, the keeping wherof he hath committed vnto your credence, than in stede of a vyle & moztal trisyng rewarde you shall receiue the gloriouse crowne of your ductye doinge, whiche shall neuer fade. Therfore in no wyse take the thing vpon your selues, that you ought to loke for at your princes handes: puenent not the dawe, whiche he woulde haue to be vncertaine vnto vs. And like as it is the parte of suche as be Elders, to shew them selues as fathers vnto the yonger, euen so the yonger ought on the other parte to shew them selues manerly and obedient vnto the elders: and lyke as the Elders submitte them selues throughe gospellyke charitie vnto all men, to thintent they maye doe the moze good, euen so the yonger ought not to abuse the gentlenes and facilitie of the Elders, but it is rather couentent for them to obey them w so muche the moze ready diligence, as they abuse the lesse their autoritie. Where true charitie is, there autoritie is nether dysdeinfull nor the youthe is outragioulye feare. He þ is set in dignitie, goeth about nothings but this, that he may doe good for other: and he þ is a subiecte, doeth moze of his owne free accorde, than he requirith him. Let all men therfore haue gentyll sobrenes fyrred vnterly in their hartes: and that shall be occasion, that nether the Elders shall be weary of their charge, nor þ yonger greued at their autoritie. God hateth feare stowtenes of stomake in men: his delygth is in lowe mynded hartes, and suche as deiecte them selues: he bestoweth his giftes vnto them that take nothing vpon them selues: he repellith & forsaketh þ proude persons, as vnwozthy his benefites. Suche as humble them selues, them he aduanceth: and suche as exalte them selues, them he throweth downe: suche as truste to their owne strengthes, them he doeth not vouchsafe to helpe: and those that dystruste theyr owne powers and depende w holpe at his becke, them he chearysheth and maynteyneth.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle.

The text.

Submitte your selues therfoze vnder the mightie hande of God, that he may exalte you, when the tyme is come. Cast all your care vpon him: for he euer careth for you. Be sober and watche, for your aduersarie the deuill as a roarynge lyon walketh aboute, seekinge whome he maye deuour: whome resist hee fast in the faithe, knowynge that the same afflictions are appointed vnto your brethren, that are in y^e worlde. But the God of all grace whiche hath called vs vnto his eternall glorye by Christ Iesus shall his owne selfe (after that ye haue suffred a lytle affliction) make you perfecte: settle, strength and stablyshe you. To him be glorye and dominion for euer and euer. Amen. By Siluanus a faithfull brother vnto you (as I suppose) haue I written breuely, exhortinge and testifying howe that this is the true grace of God, wherein ye stande. The congregacion of them whiche at Babylon are companions of your eleccion, saluterh you, and so dothe Marcus my sonne. Greete ye one another with the kyffe of loue. Peace be with you al whiche are in Christ Iesu. Amen.

Submitte your selues therfoze, not for dreade of men, but because you trust in the mightie hande of God. There is no perill, lest you shoulde be troden vnder fote perpetually for euer: for he shall aduaunce and exalte you a losse, when the day of rewardes cometh. Loke not waueringly about you, haue no distrust, be not afrayed, lest you be tossed in y^e scourges of sorowes, as though you were vndefended and set naught by: for he, that is hable in ail thinges, and seech ail thinges, hath charge of you, & wil not suffer any thing of you to perishe. It is y^e comune custome of youthe to be bet vnto pleasures, vnto ryot, & vnto wantonnesse. But be you sobre, watche you in your myndes, beyng alwayes readily attentue and alwayes circumspecte. For y^e aduersarie of your saluacion, y^e thursteth after mannes destruccio, sleepeth not, but walketh about lyke an hungrye roaring lion, seekinge in euery place whome he may snatche vp to deuour: & assaileth by ail meanes entraunce vnto you, sometye layeng wayte for you by voluptuous pleasures, sometye openly oppugnyng you by persecucions. Geue not place vnto him, but resist him with vnshynkinge stronge hartes. You wil say: where haue we power against him that is so mightie: he that hath charge of you, is mightier than he. But ail the whole trust of your hartes vpon him, and your aduersaries power shalbe nothyng. Against the faithles, he is strong: but against the faithfull he is feble. Yf he shoulde assaulte this man or that man, perchauce it might rightly be take for a soze greuous affliction, but now doeth he impugne ail the whole flocke of the godly w^{ch} like malicious hatred. He persecuteth Christ in you, he enuieith ail mens saluacion, so that the comune affliction of ail shalbe the moze easely hable to be borne, & to stande w^{ch} agreable myndes against the comune enemy. These matters shal shortly haue an ende. Eether wil God, from whome procedeth ail goodnes, leaue you succoutles in the meane season, but wil thzoughly perfourme the thing that he hath begonned in you. He hath geuen you suche stomackes, that for his sake you shoulde not be afrayed to suffer tormetes, wherby he hath called you vnto his glorye that neuer shal haue ende. He will not suffer you to mysse of the victorie: yf you wrestle manfully, he wil helpe you in your wrestlyng, and will garnyshe, strengthen and establyshe you, that beyng tormeted for a shoyte season, you maye atteine the crowne of immortallitie. By his ayde we get the victorie, & of his free gyfte we shal receyue the rewarde. For there is nothyng wherin we may chalenge any prayse to our selues: vnto God alone is ail glorye due, not onely in this worlde, but also into ail ages for euer. Amen. At this present I wil wyte no further vnto you: for of this selfe same matter, I suppose, I wrote vnto you of late, although in fewe wordes, by Siluanus a faithfull brother, & I doubt not but he deliuered the Epistle well and faithfully. In it I desired and hartily besought you, to perseuer styll in that which you haue begonned: that nothyng alter
your

All prelates maye leaue diligence at this mooste diligēt preachinge prelate, the deuyli.

your mynde. The waye that you haue entred, is the very right true waye vnto saluacion. Thus ferre you haue proceeded forwarde by the goodues of God. Continue styl stedfastly throughe his helpynge ayde, tyll you attayne vnto the victorious rewarde of lyfe that neuer shall dye. The congregacion of the christianes commende them vnto you, euen the congregacion whome God hath chosen out to himselfe together with you in Babilon, whiche in the myddes of wicked ydolattours folowe the godlynes of the gospel, and in myddes of most spithye cozrupte lyuers embrace the purenes of cleane conuersion. You are not alone by your selues, God hath his electe in euery place: In dede those are but a very fewe, howbeit they are a synely tryed seede to encrease the congregacion in tyme commynge more largely. Marke saluteth you, whiche is to me as it were my sonne. Salute you euery one other with a kysse, not after the sorte that is geue more custumely than hartely, but with an holy, pure, & true christiã mynde, which is not doone against the hearte, but is the signe of a chaste and a pure vpright louer, and not a lyeng countrefaite token. And (to make an ende of myne Epistle in lyke sorte as I beganne it) Grace and peace be alwayes present with you al, which beyng engraffed vnto the bodye of Iesu Christ, lyue by his spirite, that grace maye couple you vnto God, and peace maye glewe you together with mutual con corde: whiche thing God (that is best and most myghty) byngne to passe. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the
first Epistle of S. Peter
thapostle.

¶ The argument vpon the later Epistle of S. Peter thapostle/ by D. Erasmus of Ro- terodame.



This Epistle/ as it appeareth/ Peter wrote/ whan he was greatly growe in age, and almost at the pyntes bynke, soz in dede he maketh mencion of his death. He writeth generallye to all sortes of christianes, exhortynge them to purenes of lyfe, and by auncient examples and with the terrout of the laste iudgemēt frayeng them from spithynes: and he doeth vehemently blame them, whiche cozrupte the myndes of the symple with peruerse doctrine, in denyng the commynge of Christ.

¶ Thus endeth the Argument.